

HEALTH MANPOWER, TENNESSEE, 1998

FTE Primary Care Providers, 1998

- In 1998, a reported 4,609 full-time equivalent (FTE) primary care physicians were actively practicing in Tennessee. Of these, 70% were practicing in the four largest metropolitan counties of Davidson, Knox, Hamilton and Shelby. Mid-level providers - nurse practitioners, nurse midwives and physician assistants - added another 830 FTE primary care providers in 1998, 76% of whom were located in the 4 largest counties.
- The FTE primary care provider-to-population ratio indicates potentially underserved areas. Provider shortage areas are designated by the TDH to include counties or groups of counties that display the worst 30 ratios of providers to total population. The statewide ratio was 1:997 in 1998.
- In 1998, the provider-to-population ratio was nearly four times larger (i.e. less favorable) in nonmetropolitan Tennessee than in metropolitan areas--1:2,110 compared to 1:544.
- The lowest ratio (indicating a non-shortage area) was 411 persons per FTE primary care provider in Davidson County. The highest ratio (indicating a shortage area) was 1:6,281 in Grainger County, making it the most underserved county in the State. Of the metropolitan counties, Sullivan County had the highest ratio--1:1,176. The cutoff point for primary care shortage areas was 1:2,654 and above.
- One county, Moore, reported no FTE primary care physicians and 0.5 FTE primary care providers in 1998.

Physician Services

- The most FTE primary care physicians were located in two metropolitan counties -- Shelby County and Davidson County in 1998. Mid-Cumberland and Northeast Tennessee had the most primary care physicians among nonmetropolitan regions.
- Primary care physician-to-population ratios were lowest in Davidson and Knox Counties, on the one hand, and highest in Northeast Tennessee, on the other hand.